

TALKS ABOUT BOOKS.

The Fleming H. Revell Company, of Toronto, Chicago and New York, contributes four volumes this month. Of these the foremost in theological interest is "The Ritschlian Theology," by James Orr, M.A., D.D., Professor of Church History in the United Presbyterian College, Edinburgh, published by Hodder & Stoughton, London, foolscap 8vo., pp. 276. An excellent article on "The Religious Factor in Ritschl's Theology," from the pen of Professor Falconer, of Halifax, appeared in the "Journal" of February of last year. Dr. Orr's volume is naturally a much fuller review of the dominant Protestant theology of Germany. Albrecht Ritschl, the son of a General Superintendent of the Evangelical or Lutheran Church in Pomerania, was born at Breslau in 1822, and died in 1889, professor of theology at Göttingen. He has thus been ten years in his grave, but the school which, with manifold variations represents his teaching is a numerous one, the best known exponents of which are Herrman and Kafftan, Harnack, Schultz, Weiss and Wendt. A born theologian, Ritschl was influenced by Kant, Schleiermacher and Hegel, and fell for a time under the spell of the historico-critical school of Tübingen. Like Hofman, he maintained that "if we have rightly designated the essence of Christianity, we may comfort ourselves by saying that the nearer the system of a systematic theologian approaches to a metaphysic, the farther it removes itself from Christianity." He accused the evangelical theology of his day of scholasticism, in doing which he did not stand alone; nevertheless, Ritschl distinctly philosophizes and that often. He refuses to regard natural theology as a God-revealer, but allows Kant's practical or ethical proof of the divine existence to set forth an ethical as distinct from a religious end of Christianity. What is his religious end?